



the Ounce

Key Recommendations

An effective federal early childhood agenda will **simultaneously grow funding for all preschool and programs serving infants and toddlers and their families** to promote healthy development from birth to five.

Implement the campaign commitment to quadruple the number of infants and toddlers participating in Early Head Start.

- Invest an initial \$2 billion increase in Head Start and Early Head Start through the FY10 budget
- Propose regulations for the conversion of Head Start slots into Early Head Start slots to allow communities to increase access to Early Head Start when local assessments indicate that their greatest need is for high quality care for very young children

Create Early Learning Challenge Grants.

- Create a federal-state challenge grant program to encourage the expansion of high-quality early childhood based on highly successful models such as Head Start, Early Head Start and Illinois Preschool for All models, serving at-risk children first
- Require qualifying programs to meet Early Head Start standards of quality at minimum
- Set aside 50% of funds for programs serving children birth-3 with the greatest need

Expand access to evidence based home visiting programs for at-risk mothers and children.

- Invest in the *Education Begins at Home Act* (EBAH) and include funding to provide at-risk mothers with services that will prepare them to support their child's healthy development
- Encourage the development of state infrastructure to support home visiting through training, technical assistance, monitoring and data systems, by expanding and continuing the existing Federal Infrastructure grant program

Create a Presidential Early Learning Council.

- Model this council on successful state councils, such as that in Illinois, empowering it to move the Obama administration's vision for early childhood forward
- Include designees from the federal agencies whose programs impact the ability of young children to learn, including (but not limited to) the Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Agriculture, and Housing
- Include representation of state and local government, program providers, and key partners

Include early childhood programs in policies which provide funding for school facilities.

- Invest in the construction of facilities which provide educational services for children from birth to five
- Improve and rehabilitate facilities in school and community agencies which provide birth to five services